

AMENDMENTS TO CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A probe arrangement for the electrothermal coagulation of tissue comprising a distal probe tip and a proximal hand portion, comprising

at least a first and a second electrode in the region of the distal probe tip, said electrodes being disposed on the exterior of the probe such that in use the electrodes can be brought into contact with tissue simultaneously;

an inner conductor (10) which extends from the distal probe tip to the proximal hand portion and is adapted to electrically contact the first electrode in the distal probe tip, and

an outer conductor (19) which extends from the distal probe tip to the proximal hand portion and is adapted to electrically contact the second electrode in the distal probe tip, wherein the inner and outer conductors (10, 19) are electrically insulated from each other,

characterized in that the inner conductor (10) is designed to increase the flexural stiffness of the probe arrangement between the probe tip and the hand portion.

2. (Currently amended) A probe arrangement as set forth in claim 1 ~~characterized in that the inner conductor (10) is~~ further comprising a force-lockingly force-locking and / or positively lockingly locking connection connected that connects the inner conductor to both to the hand portion and also to the probe tip.

3. (Currently amended) A probe arrangement as set forth in claim 2 characterized in that the inner conductor (10) is connected by a screw connection both to the hand portion and also to the probe tip.

4. (Currently amended) A probe arrangement as set forth in claim 1 ~~characterized in that the inner conductor (10) is connected~~ further comprising a connection between the inner conductor and to the hand portion and the probe tip in such a way that the inner conductor (10) is under a tensile stress and the outer conductor (19) is under a compression stress.

5. (Currently amended) A probe arrangement as set forth in claim 1 characterized in that the inner conductor ~~(10)~~ is in the form of a metal tube.

6. (Currently amended) A probe arrangement as set forth in one of the preceding claims characterized in that the distal end ~~(10b)~~ of the inner conductor ~~(10)~~ ~~can be~~ is screwed to the probe tip and the proximal end ~~(10a)~~ of the inner conductor ~~(10)~~ is adapted to be braced in relation to the hand portion.

7. (Currently amended) A probe arrangement as set forth in claim 1 characterized by an insulator ~~(18)~~ which is arranged between the inner and outer conductors ~~(10, 19)~~ and adapted to electrically insulate the inner conductor ~~(10)~~ from the outer conductor ~~(19)~~.

8. (Currently amended) A probe arrangement as set forth in claim 5 characterized in that the inner and outer conductors ~~(10, 19)~~ and the insulator ~~(18)~~ are arranged coaxially relative to each other.

9. (Currently amended) A probe arrangement as set forth in one of the preceding claims characterized in that the inner conductor ~~(10)~~ has a hollow duct ~~(15)~~ which is adapted to pass cooling or heating fluid from the proximal end to the distal end, and a through bore ~~(16)~~ which is adapted to allow the heating or cooling fluid supplied through the hollow duct ~~(15)~~ to be discharged from the hollow duct ~~(15)~~, and provided between the insulator ~~(18)~~ and the outer conductor ~~(19)~~ is an intermediate space ~~(20)~~ which is adapted to pass the cooling or heating fluid of the hollow duct ~~(15)~~, which is flowing out of the through bore ~~(16)~~, back to the proximal end.

10. (Currently amended) A probe arrangement as set forth in claim 1 characterized in that the first electrode is in the form of a tip electrode ~~(11)~~.

11. (Currently amended) A probe arrangement as set forth in claim 1 characterized in that the second electrode is in the form of a shaft electrode ~~(13)~~.

12. (Currently amended) A probe arrangement as set forth in claim 1 characterized in that arranged between the tip electrode ~~(11)~~ and the shaft electrode ~~(13)~~ is an insulator element ~~(12)~~ which is adapted to insulate the tip electrode ~~(11)~~ from the shaft electrode ~~(13)~~.

13. (Currently amended) A probe arrangement as set forth in claim 10 characterized in that the insulator element ~~(12)~~ is of an annular configuration.

14. (Currently amended) A probe arrangement as set forth in claim 1 characterized by an insulation tube ~~(21)~~ which ~~is adapted to insulate~~ insulates the outer conductor ~~(19)~~ outwardly.

15. (Currently amended) A probe arrangement as set forth in claim ~~1~~ 14 further comprising an insulator that insulates said outer conductor from said inner conductor and wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the hand portion ~~(3, 4)~~ has a first hand portion element ~~(3)~~ which is adapted to receive the proximal ends of the inner conductor ~~(10)~~, the outer conductor ~~(19)~~, the insulator ~~(18)~~ and the insulation tube ~~(21)~~.

16. (Currently amended) A probe arrangement as set forth in claim ~~13~~ 15 characterized in that the first hand portion element ~~(3)~~ has a first blind bore ~~(9)~~ and a longitudinal slot ~~(67)~~ between the proximal end ~~(3a)~~ of the first hand portion element ~~(3)~~ and the first blind bore ~~(9)~~, which is adapted to pass an electrically conductive spring wire ~~(8)~~ from the proximal end ~~(3a)~~ of the first hand portion element ~~(3)~~ to the outer conductor ~~(19)~~ in the first blind bore ~~(9)~~ in order to electrically contact the outer conductor ~~(19)~~.

17. (Currently amended) A probe arrangement as set forth in claim 14 characterized in that the first hand portion element ~~(3)~~ has a transverse bore ~~(6)~~ and a second blind bore ~~(31)~~ which cross each other and are adapted to provide a communication between the proximal end ~~(3a)~~ of the hand portion element ~~(3)~~ and.

18. (Currently amended) A probe arrangement as set forth in one of claims 4 through 15 characterized in that at its proximal end ~~(10a)~~ the inner conductor ~~(10)~~ has a

male screwthread which is adapted to brace the inner conductor (10) with a screwthreaded nut in relation to the first hand portion element (3).

19. (Currently amended) A probe arrangement as set forth in one of ~~claims 7 through 16~~ claim 9 characterized by an electrically little- conducting or non-conducting cooling fluid, preferably deionized water, wherein said fluid is circulated toward the distal end of said probe through said hollow duct and then away away from said distal end via said intermediate space.